Knotting Matters

The Magazine of the International Guild of Knot Tyers

Issue #105 December 2009

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Issue 105 - December 2009 www.igkt.net

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COVER PHOTOGRAPHS

Front:

The five-pointed star is an elegant reminder of the need to conserve our oceans - the knot adds something also - knot by Philpott and stars by his wife (she is the real star!).

Back:

This pair of photographs of a knotboard incorporating an original seahorse, and a stunning picture frame around the USS Platte, were made by Joe Bennett (upper) and by Jesse Scott Eaves, a new member from Louisiana, USA (lower). Congratulations to you both! More in How I Did It.

See page 42 & center pages

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From the Editor's Blotter

In this last issue of 2009, I have decided to start introducing some different material - research. Part of our remit as a Guild is to conduct research into the art, craft and science of knotting. The two abstracts added as letters to the editor, sent by our interested participants, are here as a foretaste of what some technical papers look like in the abstract. I am not suggesting at this point that we should prepare papers to be sent for veterinary review or for archeological or ethnological review. We have our own publication and it behooves us to prepare our own standards of publication and review that may be considered worthy of the name "research" - what are your thoughts? Do you feel that individuals should contribute only in their area of interest (veterinary, archeological, artistic, ethnographic, historic, forensic or other) and only to other magazines/journals or is there a place, once a year say, in our own magazine, Knotting Matters, for such research results? Who should sponsor or pay for that research? Should this be a separate arm of the IGKT or should it not even enter into our thoughts or perhaps there is a compromise between the two extremes? Why do we have this remit in the first place and should it be pursued by our members - if not, then by whom? Your answers and comments are most welcome! Take a look at the Pyramid Knot by former President Jan Vos and the TH with a hole by Patrick Lefour for some very detailed projects!

I am reminded by some of our readers that they would like more knots in their magazine. I could not agree more! Now, if only some of those same people who complain that there are not enough knots for them could also send in their own knot adventures, perhaps in the form of a "How I Did It" piece or even a full-length article of how they achieved their own knotting nirvana, we could then have a fully responsive magazine with articles and information from all of our members. Your editor does not write the magazine, he just edits the material sent in - it is up to you to send it in, and I look forward to your contribution - don't worry about your skills at writing, because I can deal with that - I just need your written copy and photographs to start with! Here are some guidelines:

Length: About five hundred words is fine, longer if need be - or perhaps just six words?
Format: Word (2003 or 2007), a text document or a pdf if you are thinking I may change something you write (remember that the Editor's decision is final)
Photographs: Yes, please, although they may not be published in color, they should be sent as attachments of 1 or 2 MB, in color, at a density of 200 dpi or better

I have been reading and contributing to the Forum on our Guild web-site for some time and I find it fascinating the depth of knowledge exhibited by our Forum contributors, which oftimes includes our own IGKT members. How about jotting a few of your thoughts on paper and sending them to your KM editor? Not every one of our members has internet access or wishes to access the internet, and they may miss out on your words of wisdom - indeed, some of our major contributors on the Forum are not members of the Guild - how do you feel about writing a letter or even an article for your own magazine?

Lastly, I wish all of our readers a very happy holiday season and a brilliant New Year!

Wishing you all good speed, fair words and photos, and fair leads.

Sincerely yours, **Lindsey Philpott**

Notes from the Mousepad

It's been a busy period for me recently with a number of e-mails and letters from members and others, as well as trying to bring our records up to date. For example in his book "Much Ado About Knotting" Geoffrey Budworth charted the progress of the Guild from its founding in 1982 up until 2002 and included a list of the venues for the AGM and half yearly meeting. I have updated this list and by the time you read this it should be available on our website (www.igkt.net) under "Knotting Events".

I am frequently asked by non-members about supplies of materials, contacting members in a particular area, for example - training and similar. I will either pass the e-mail to a member in the area (if there is one) - without disclosing members' details of course - or suggest that the enquirer join our website Forum if they are not interested in joining the Guild. I would encourage all members to drop in to the Forum occasionally even if you don't join – there are some interesting discussions (and disagreements!) about knotting and you can have your say in real time – but I also ask members who contribute to the Forum to give the benefit of your wisdom to members generally through Knotting Matters, please; a copy of your post(s) will make interesting reading.

Finally we are still looking for a Supplies Secretary to take over our sales of books etc. We will be trying to simplify procedures as much as possible to make this job easier, so if anyone is interested please get in touch as soon as possible.

If no-one is prepared to take this [Supplies Secretary] on, the Council will stop selling books etc., by mail order after 31 December 2009.

Barry Mault

Honorary Secretary

Letters to the Editor

The views expressed in reader's letters do not necessarily reflect those of the IGKT Council. The Editor reserves the right to shorten any letter as necessary.

Dear Editor,

I would like to express my sincere and heartfelt thanks to all who made the October meeting of International Guild of Knot Tyers at the Whaling Museum in New Bedford, MA, USA, such a wonderful experience for me. A special thanks to Bob Dollar for all his work and hours spent on organizing that weekend.
That weekend was an event filled with excitement, yet a little sadness in my heart. My Dad, who was much loved and admired, was not there to share this with me. 12 years ago, in 1997, he asked John Burke "How do I join this group - I am a closet knot tyer"? Two years later in 1999 there was a meeting of IGKT at the Whaling Museum, of which my father and mother were both a part. My Dad displayed his knot work of lanyards, beckets, etc., and my mother made his display signs in calligraphy.

My mother had so many memories of ten years ago, and she kept many pictures of that meeting, which she showed to us all. She also presented a charcoal portrait of Clifford Ashley, which she did many years ago, to his daughter, Phoebe Ashley Chardon. I was so amazed at all the lovely work that was on everyone's tables and how everyone appreciated all the others' accomplishments. I was also a little overwhelmed with trying to gather in my mind all the new ideas and designs. How we have grown over the years with knotting, and some even publishing their own books!

So, on behalf of my mother, I would like to thank everyone who took the time to come and look at our display and to talk. Much kindness was shown from all of you wonderful people and it was much appreciated. I will look at all the pictures that were taken, think of the many new friendships we made and remember the memories of a lovely weekend in October 2009 at R & W Rope Co, the Whaling Museum, restaurant and at Clifford Ashley's farm.

Erika Hamer
"The Busybee"
Dartmouth, MA, USA

Dear Sir,
In any language there are alphabets which form words and words form sentences. Drawing a parallel, it should be possible to define the alphabets of knotting i.e. a turn, an end, a bight, etc. which go to form a knot. Within the whole world of knots it should be possible to divide them into basic knots e.g. an overhand knot, a clove hitch, etc. and derived knots e.g. fisherman's bend. Projects in knotting involving more than one knot can be compared with a sentence e.g. a Bell Rope. I have just expressed the concept in short and I am sure that the IGKT has the necessary expertise to examine the idea, identify the alphabets and classify the knots between the Basic Knots and the Derived Knots.
With regards,
Satish Patki
IGKT Member, India [How about it, knot-tyers - any linguists out there? - Ed]

Dear Sirs,

My name is Steven Smith; I'm a student at the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, USA. I am a graphic design major, working on a project that I was hoping you could help me with. I am in the process of designing a project that is to show what knotting is and how to do it. Along with that, I'm to design a package for this project. I do not know anything about this art form outside of what is on your website and on other websites. I was hoping you could enlighten me as to what knotting is, where it came from and what got you and others into this hobby.
If you could e-mail me anything about knotting that you know, it would be of great help.
Thank you,

Steven Smith
[e-mail available from the Editor]

[Note from the Editor - the following two abstracts are an indication of some research into the use and history of knotted structures and string. See also letter from the Editor, this issue]

Sent by David A. Crossley BVetMed PhD MRCVS FAVD DipEVDC
Recognised Veterinary Dental Specialist

A Secure Aberdeen Knot: *In Vitro* assessment of knot security in plasma and fat.
Objectives: To determine the minimum number of throws/turns to form a secure Aberdeen knot and the maximum ear slippage for these knots using three metric polydioxanone coated in fat or plasma. To compare plasma and novel canine liquefied fat as suture coating mediums for in vitro knot security testing.
Methods: Throws/turns were incrementally added until a secure knot was found for plasma and fat. Knots were tensioned until failure and remaining ear length measured. A secure knot was defined as ear slippage 3 mm or less in 20 consecutively tested knots. Ear slippages were statistically analysed.
Results: Minimum secure configuration was a 3 + 1 knot in plasma and fat, and its ear slipped a maximum of 2 mm in plasma and 2.5 mm in fat. A secure 4 + 1 knot had a maximum ear slippage of 0.5 mm, which was significantly less [better] than that of the 3 + 1 knot ($P<0.0001$). Fat coating suture significantly decreases in vitro knot security compared with plasma ($P=0.0035$)
by O. Schaff, M. Glyde and R.E. Day
as published in the ***Journal of Small Animal Practice*** (2009)
50, 415 - 421.
Authors are in Perth, Western Australia.
[Ed - the Aberdeen Knot appears to be a multiple slipped chain knot with a final pass of the working end through the last chain loop, where the "ear" is the working end]

Prehistoric String Theory. How twisted fibres helped to shape the world.
Author Karen Hardy, University of York, Heslington, York, UK

The author reviews the role of string in early human communities, using prehistoric and ethnographic evidence. Fibres, rolled into string, offer a technical means of holding things together; but the process of manufacturing string itself inspired special roles and structures - which in turn held together the members of communities.
Published in ***Antiquity***, 82 (2008): 271-280.

KNOT THE WAY ROUND

Part 1 of a story by Lesley and Jeff Wyatt

At the end of August 2008 my wife, Lesley, and I headed "down under" to spend a year driving around Australia. Within a few days of our arrival in Sydney we found and purchased a small bus, a Toyota Coaster, which had been converted into a motor home.

We had very little planned with regards to an itinerary but one thing we didn't want to miss was the Wooden Boat Festival in Hobart, Tasmania early in February. We also wanted to reach Darwin and Kakadu before"The Wet", and so headed north-west through northern NSW and south-west Queensland. After a week or so we reached Mount Isa where we stayed for a couple of days. Whilst there, we met a couple, Max and Annabel, who lived half the year in a rather grand motor home, and the other half on their boat. So, of course, Max was interested in ropework and asked me to teach him some useful knots.

After visiting, Kakadu, Darwin, Katherine and Kununurra we arrived in Broome where we decided to stay for more than just a couple of days as we had in previous towns. We had met another English couple, Marion and Terry, who live in southern Queensland, but are touring around like us – but they're doing it in a Land Rover and caravan. They were fascinated by our hobbies, my ropework and Lesley's pyrography (woodburning or pokerwork) and keen to have a go at both. I spent several evenings showing them both how to tie various knots.

Marion wanted me to make her a key fob. She had a passion for anything red, but unfortunately I didn't have any red cord. However, necessity being the mother of invention I made one out of white cord and dropped it in a saucepan of beetroot juice. Voila – one red key fob.

I was sitting one afternoon amusing myself, tying knots, when the three kids staying in a motorhome opposite came over to see what I was doing. They were soon wanting to have a go, so, having told them to check with their parents, I proceeded to show them some simple basic knots.

After a couple of hours they left, each proudly clutching a monkey's fist key fob. Possible future recruits for the IGKT?

Early in November we had a few days in Carnarvon, further down the WA coast. One day while I was getting some bits and pieces sorted out with the bus, Lesley went for a drive around town with Marion and Terry and visited a fish shop near the port. Lesley noticed a rope mat in the doorway and asked if it had been made by a local, thinking that there might be a knotsman in the town. Unfortunately, Bruce, the owner of the fish shop, had bought it from a wholesaler, but was interested in knowing how it was made, and possibly getting some more made. Lesley said "Jeff could easily make one" and that I'd get in touch with Bruce.

The following morning Lesley and I went back to the fish shop to meet up with Bruce for his mat-making lesson. (I always prefer to show people how to make the things they want rather than do it for them). Bruce seemed to pick up the concept pretty well and insisted on paying for his lessons. As I never charge for giving lessons I refused, but he then asked if I would take payment in kind, so I walked away with a big smile on my face and 2kgs (4.25lbs) of the biggest prawns.

Soon after this we visited the Shark Bay area. We were returning from a couple of days in Monkey Mia, where we paddled with the dolphins. I suddenly spotted clouds of black smoke spewing out behind us. I thought it might be a blockage in the diesel filter. I tried to clear it, but within a few yards I knew that it was something else. I pulled over to the side of the road and the engine died. Clouds of smoke and oil vapour and an awful smell. Our mobile phones were out of range so we flagged down a passing motorist and asked them if they could get some help sent from Denham, just a few miles down the road. Within half an hour a breakdown truck appeared and Betty G (as we had christened our bus) was unceremoniously hauled on board. We were then taken to a diesel mechanic's workshop where the owner said that he should be able to do something in a day or so. We were then deposited in the Shark Bay Caravan Park in Denham to await a tow back to the workshop.

A couple of days later Betty G was collected and we transferred into a cabin, after unsuccessfully trying to track down a spare engine, and an equally unsuccessful idea to cobble a good engine from two damaged ones.

Unfortunately they weren't compatible with ours, so the mechanic decided that the only thing he could do was to rebuild our cooked one with new parts. In the meantime, I spent a lot of time fishing for squid and Lesley was equally industrious – reading, sunbathing and swimming in the caravan park's lovely pool.

One day while I was busy fishing; a bloke visited our cabin, asking for me. He had found my wallet down by the wharf and remembered seeing me ride past on my bike. As Denham is a fairly small town and all the locals know each other, he was soon able to track me down. He was also interested in meeting me as he thought the wallet was rather an interesting one. In fact it had been given to me by a knot-tyer whom we had met on a previous Australian trip and had the insignia 'Maritime Union of Australia' embossed on it – our Good Samaritan happened to be a member. He left the wallet with Lesley, but wouldn't accept anything as a reward for the trouble he'd taken. It was our turn to track him down, and when we did I offered to at least buy him a drink, but no, he wouldn't hear of it. I found out that he was a professional skipper and had his own boat, so I made him a bellrope and made sure that he accepted it. I also gave a few knotting lessons to a mother and daughter who ran a garage, fishing shop and motel in town. The daughter made jewellery and was interested in knowing how to make cord earrings.

Near our cabin in the Caravan Park was the residential cabin of a guy who was building a fibreglass replica of a wooden sailing boat. I offered to make him some ocean mats for his boat if he had some old rope I could use. He was only too pleased and I made three mats for his boat. The remaining scrap I made into three different miniature side fenders, all for me.

Eventually, three and a half weeks after our little mishap we were ready to get back on the road, $A10,500 lighter in our pockets!!!

We carried on down the WA coast to Perth and after some more delays due to further engine problems, we decided that, if we were going to make Hobart in February we would have to miss out on the southernmost part of WA. So we cut across, inland, to Kalgoorlie, then down to Normanton and set off across the Nullarbor Plain. Surprisingly, this was a much easier part of our trip than expected. We did it with just two overnight stops and arrived in Ceduna just before Christmas. We found a nice caravan park right near the sea and settled in for a couple of days. We had decorated our bus with some lights in the back window and a little Christmas tree and tinsel on the front. We didn't fancy turkey but found a couple of enormous t-bone steaks. Our table was decorated with small candles set in some cord holders that I made the day before – very nice it all looked too. We toured around the Eyre Peninsular stopping overnight at various places one of which was Whyalla.

On arrival at most towns where we were going to stop we called in to the Visitor Information Centres. The one in Whyalla was particularly interesting as, parked next to it is the Australian Navy corvette HMAS Whyalla – one has to bear in mind that it is in fact nearly 2 Km from the nearest water. She was moved to her present location in 1987.

In Mount Gambier I showed a few knots to a fellow-traveller, and then in the Warrnambool Historic Village I found a wood turner who made me a very nice needle case.

When we got to Melbourne I was hoping to catch up with Darren Samphier, a Guild member in Melbourne, but he was otherwise occupied and couldn't get away. Whilst we waited the few days before catching the ferry to Tasmania we had various trips around Melbourne. We spent some time looking for the Maritime Museum, only to be told that it was in the [process of] being refurbished - very disappointing as we had spent some time there during our last visit to Melbourne some years ago.

We took an overnight ferry and arrived in Devonport early in the morning of 27 January. After breakfasting in a nearby hotel (compliments of the ferry company) we called in at the Devonport Maritime Museum and spoke to some of the volunteers who man the place. It's a very well thought out museum with so many fascinating artifacts and information. I of course talked 'knots' to them and they mentioned that they knew our friend Frank Brown down in Hobart – there were actually some of his bellropes attached to bells throughout the museum. There were some lovely wooden models of ships and when I mentioned that Lesley was interested in carving some Tasmanian wood, the Curator, Bob Vellacort, went out back and returned with some pieces of wood for her to try – really kind. They asked me if we would call back to the Museum on our return to Devonport at the end of February and show the visiting public a little bit of knot-tying and pyrography. We agreed and thought we'd try to spend at least a couple of days there.

We wanted to see as much of Tasmania as we could before getting to Hobart so, on leaving Devonport we headed east and then north along the River Tamar. Over the river and we again turned north ending up at Low Head by the mouth of the Tamar. We visited another Maritime Museum, this time part of a group of buildings which used to accommodate the Pilots Station for big ships going up the river to Launceston. A nice little museum in the middle of expansion and renovation, with quite a good selection of ropework. Travelling on down the east coast of Tasmania we passed through a town called Sorell and spotted what looked like a Car Boot Sale – yes it was a Car Boot Sale so we had to stop and have a look. I even found a guy who made some great braided leather items.

A couple days later we arrived in Hobart and called in briefly on Frank and Lynn Brown. We then found ourselves a nice caravan park, not too far from town and settled in for few days of Tassie hospitality. In the following days we spent some time in the Maritime Museum and looking around Hobart. At the end of that week we were joined at the caravan park by Colin Grundy, previous KM Editor, and Jane Bamford in their rented motorhome. They were on a world tour and had timed their trip to Australia to coincide with the Wooden Boat Festival. Their next stop was New Zealand and a visit to several members of the New Zealand Chapter. [The saga continues in the next issue - Ed].

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

My Fellow Knot Tyers

Once again we come to the end of another year and the approaching Holiday Seasons around the globe.

I am pleased to the ***n***th degree that it comes on the heels of a fantastic half year meeting, held in the historic whaling town of New Bedford, USA. A great time was had, for those who were able to make the trip. However, it was one that required great enthusiasm and a good bit of hard work, as all things are that are done correctly. I cannot thank Bob Dollar, and all of his local crew, enough for putting it on and for all the little things that make gatherings like this one stand out. Special appreciations also go out to Rod McCollester of R&W Rope, for the hospitality at the warehouse and Friday's cook out and a great thank you to Alain and Phoebe Ashley Chardon for opening up the Ashley Farm for a post-meeting tour and reception.

I am pleased to announce the awarding of two honors at the ½ year AGM. To our Past Hon. Sec Dave Walker, the President's Certificate of Honor was presented. Dave served the Guild faithfully in both the roles as Honorary Secretary and as Supply Secretary. Under his term, our membership files undertook the complete transformation and file corrections needed in this working world of computers. Dave has also served, and still does, as an ambassador for the Guild by promoting its worth through his fender-making business and the numerous demonstrations and classes which he undertakes throughout the year. Dave – Thank You.

The second was the presentation of a new award in honor of Gary Sessions, a member from the USA who passed away this year. This is the Ditty Bag Award. This is to be presented at each half year meeting to a member of the Guild who has, judged by a selected committee, the best ditty bag. The first recipient is Barry Brown, a person highly respected by many, and especially by Gary, for the working and decorative bags he has produced and the lessons he has provided in their construction.

Congratulations to both of our outstanding members.

In attendance at the New Bedford meeting were 94 members, and their spouses, from five countries; Canada, England, France, the Netherlands and the USA. A nice steady crowd flowed thru the 2 ½ days of displays with a few new members signing up both there and after the meeting. Two new members that we acquired made quite an impression on me and brought to mind our role in promoting the art of knot tying. The first was a gentleman who came just to have a curious look after reading of the event in the local paper. After viewing the displays, he attended the meeting, stayed through lunch, then decided to join the Guild, stayed the afternoon and then joined us for the banquet that evening. The second was a young lad of 9 years of age. He spent a good bit of time at every booth it seemed and I am not sure just how long he kept his parents there. But when he passed me as he left, he was clutching numerous fobs, TH bracelets and had the biggest smile and the widest opened eyes, clearly showing the joy and excitement of wanting to learn more about all the things that he had gotten to see firsthand.

I point out these two for they reveal to me the joy, the reasons and the direction that our Guild and membership should be taking. I am pleased to say that I see these exact goals, as well, in the Executive Board. From areas such as expanding membership, updating communication and education through use of the web and through branch meetings, the tasks brought forth since the AGM by each council member are increasing, as evident in our three-hour-plus-long committee meetings.

To each, I wish a peaceful holiday season and a joyous new year. For my New Year's wish, I hope that all our members work to bring more into the world of knotting and the Guild so that all may have a Knotting Good Time.

Smooth turns
Dan Machowski

PJ's Ditty Bag

by Barry Brown

I made this ditty bag for a friend and new member of the IGKT, Peter J Nelson, in return for some of his beautiful tools. Welcome to the Guild, PJ!

The particulars of PJs bag are as follows:

From the head down; the hanging loop is covered with square knotting in cotton seine twine, followed by a Spanish Ring Knot, also in cotton seine twine. Next comes a six-strand Mathew Walker Knot in Buff polyester, closely followed by a large casa knot in cotton which has a Flores button knot style interweave in flax running around it.

The centre of the grip is covered with double Crowning (over two crowning) in best quality polished flax, followed by another large cotton Casa Knot with the Flores Button knot style interweave and another six-strand Mathew Walker Knot.

The six lanyard legs are terminated with eye splices through which the six cotton Crowned Star Knot buttons are buttoned; the necks of the splices have small cotton Casa Knots around them.

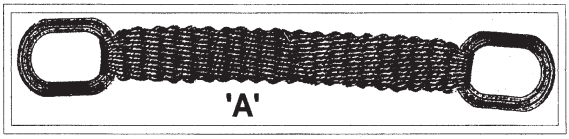
There is also a Crowned Star Knot button on the base of the bag for the lanyard on the hanging loop to attach to, making the ditty bag into a handy shoulder bag. The sliding closure knot is a Pineapple knot, braided in leather; the core of this is made up from other braided leather knots - no wooden beads here!

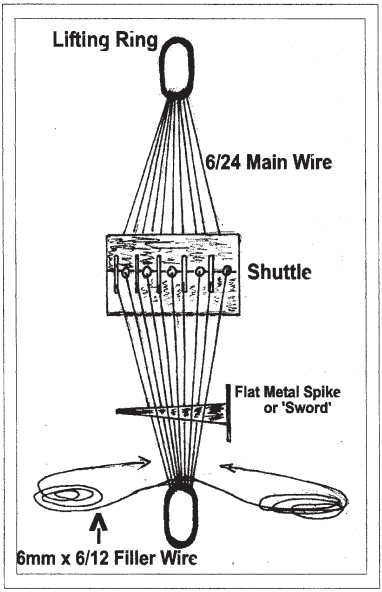
Take care,
Barry

Rope Bracelet

by Brian Jarrett, Lieutenant, Royal Navy

Please find enclosed an extract from the "Knot Manual" manuscript which I am still working on. The wire ropr bracelet was made in large quantities by my lifting gear company up and until the 1990's. Technology has moved on since, but I believe that the technique of the manufacture of this very attractive and useful sling should be somehow recorded for posterity.
Best regards,
Brian Jarrett



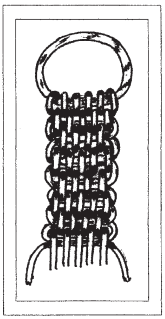


The Wire Rope Bracelet.

The wire rope bracelet is based on the old sailing ship days of 'sword matting' it was called sword matting since it was made by using a sword like tool. The wire rope bracelet is made of 10mm diameter 6/24 steel wire rope with a filler wire of 6mm diameter 6/12 construction to give a SWL of 5 tonnes or 10 tonnes when used as a 'Basket Hitch', but larger wire maybe used for higher loads up to 20 tonnes (40 tonnes as a 'Basket Hitch). They are normally used for lifting heavy 10 to 20 ton flat steel rolls. The finished item is similar to 'A' above.

Tools Required. Steel mallet, Steel flat spike or sword, A two part steel jig or shuttle. Electrician's tape. Two metal grade 80 lifting rings.

The Construction. The main 6/24 steel wire rope is stretched between the two lifting rings by passing the wire through the holes and slots of the shuttle. The shuttle is in two parts for removal at the end of the weaving process. The flat metal spike is used to separate the wires by weaving in and out and then turning it 90° to separate the main wires. Both ends of the filler wire are then crossed and passed through the gap made by the metal spike each time the weave is formed. Continue the weaving until you reach as close as possible to the end ring. Finish by tucking the end of the filler wire into the weave.



The developing weave.

The 6th Instalment on a philosophy of knots

NEW AGE KNOTTING

by 'Knut Kanute'

'The energies of our system will decay, the glory of the sun will be dimmed, and the earth, tideless and inert, will no longer tolerate the race which has for a moment disturbed its solitude.' (A.J. Balfour, 1st Earl of that Ilk, Scottish statesman and philosopher, 1848 - 1930).

Knotting, the way most of us preserve and practise it, is about as useful to the wealthy industrialized nations here on planet Earth as synchronized swimming is for the disadvantaged Third World. Unlike water ballet with nose-clips however, knots may yet hold potential for rich and poor alike.

Movies based on post-apocalypse scenarios, such as *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome* (starring Mel Gibson) and *Waterworld* (starring Keving Costner), portray makeshift settlements of survivors reliant upon lash-ups of rope and cordage. In real life too, when and where irreplaceable flora and fauna, local beauty spots and designated sites of special scientific or heritage interest are endangered by development, the New Age protesters who gather to obstruct the developers use rope-working know-how to retreat off-ground into the trees where they can remain out of reach of officialdom's bailiffs and bulldozers.

It is true, as Arthur Balfour predicted, that every species will inevitably become extinct. Uncountable numbers have already done so, and we humans are destined eventually to join them. We should not however, recklessly or carelessly, hasten our demise. This new century is likely to be at least as hostile as its predecessors, and we may have only decades remaining - or so environmental campaigners warn us - in which to moderate our reliance on technologies that could fail or otherwise destroy us. Threatened by over-population, mass migration, famine, epidemic disease and war, combined with both climate change and the depletion of finite resources, humankind must adapt or maybe die out.

Then our future could be in the hands of men and women who understand earth sciences, biology and oceanography, who can fish and hunt, cultivate crops, breed livestock, and who rely more upon appliances powered by the sun, wind, geothermal energy, waves, tides, muscular effort...and cordage. The prospect adds purpose and value to out repertoire as well as our record of innovative knotting.

Now, I am not a back-to-nature person; I prefer to go back to the hotel (by taxi-cab if possible). So I do not expect anyone to replace overnight his or her Nintendo Wii and

PlayStation 3 video games with cat's cradle. Nevertheless, a few years ago, I wrote and illustrated a series of knotting pieces that were printed in *Earth Garden*, the Australian magazine for those self-sufficiency exponents who build turf houses, keep chickens, and grow their own fruits and vegetables. Perhaps it is time we replaced our displays of fancy bell ropes and bag lanyards, knotted chess sets and chest beckets, knot boards, and the trickiest Turk's Heads, with demonstrations of every imaginable application of rigging and practical rope-work, from aerial runways and Chinese windlasses to rope-driven machinery, with net and rope making from renewable and recycled materials. Because, as H.G. Wells (1886 - 1946), the English novelist and popular historian in *Outline of History* (1920), wrote:

'Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.'

Junks and Sampans of the Upper Yangtze

A few years ago there was a television program about making a bridge in China. The lashings were made from a bamboo rope. In KM 76 Roger Carter told us that details of bamboo rope making could be found in the book '***Junks and Sampans of the Yangtze***'.

In Roger Carter's letter a very important word was omitted from the title of the book he mentioned. The word is "Upper" and the title should read "***Junks and Sampans of the Upper Yangtze***" by G.R.G. Worcester, River Inspector, Chinese Maritime Customs during a difficult period in the recent history of China.

Mr Worcester wrote the book about the Upper Yangtze and followed it a few years later with a two volume work on "***The Junks and Sampans of the Yangtze***" covering those parts of the river and the estuary which were not covered in his first book. In the second book a short account is given of rope making in Shanghai and he seems surprised that the same "jenny" is used whatever the material chosen for the rope. ["jenny" is a multi-spool spinning wheel - Ed] As it was necessary to use the road as a ropewalk, the lengths produced were not as long as might be expected, but a man and two boys working together would be expected to produce 70 to 90 lengths of rope each of about 50 feet in one day.

In another suburb, where compensation was paid to shopkeepers fronting the road, longer lengths were produced. At the time of writing, rice stalks were being turned into rope by machine but hemp and coir ropes were still handmade. The book also describes net making as being similar to that practised in Europe and explains how China grass (*Urtica Nivea*) which I assume to be of the nettle family and not related to a well known British hand cream, is prepared, made into twinned threads and eventually treated with a boiling solution of mangrove bark. These nets, if properly cared for, were expected to last for three years after which they would be chopped up, mixed with other ingredients and used for caulking. The larger nets, or great nets, took about 200 twelve-hour days to make, but the number of workers involved is not mentioned.

When we find the section on bamboo rope in the Upper Yangtze book, we discover that it has many uses but is not so easy to handle as hemp and it will not coil so quickly although it is lighter and takes a greater pulling strain than hemp and is more resistant to abrasion. These properties are important because the ropes for "tracking" or man powered towing against the current, are

always of bamboo. In many places, remember that we are describing pre-1940 China, where the only way to go upstream was by teams of men pulling the boats for perhaps days at a time. The tracking rope might be between 400 and 700 yards long and a Junk might require about a mile of bamboo rope of varying lengths and sizes. For safety the tracking ropes usually only last for one trip, as economy here could be fatal.

For safety, the men hauling the rope have a simple quick release device at the end of their harnesses, consisting of a knob knot which locks when the tow line is half hitched around the tracking rope and comes free when the pressure is removed. The bamboo is split into long thin strands, which are then plaited into rope by a man standing at the top of a slope or perched up a tower. The finished rope passes down a shute of bamboo hung around his waist (he also wears a stout apron), and slides out of the way down the hill until it is coiled up. The twist consists of a varying number of bamboo strips, always in multiples of four.

The finished rope is then steamed for four hours over a solution of lime. Tests carried out on some of this rope suggest that it is 20% stronger when wet than when dry, as opposed to hemp which can be up to 25% weaker when wet. Sometimes a core is included to act as a former for the plaited main rope. In some places bamboo rope was laid in the more conventional way, but those ropes were only used for mooring, rigging and lashing and never for tracking. Palm fibre rope was also made using a "jenny" to lay the rope in the manner with which we are familiar in the West.

Returning to the television program which started this correspondence - the bamboo was cut down and then split into fine strips while still fairly green and workable. A parallel core of the tougher outer layers was placed down and the more flexible inner strands were plaited around this to give a rope of about 4cm diameter. Three of these were then plaited to form cables from which a suspension bridge was hung. The platform was suspended from laid cordage made in a familiar way with a wimble. ["wimble" is a cranked device for making rope out of twisted straw; also a device for boring holes, like an auger or gimlet - Ed] After proving the strength of the thinner laid cord it was used for the lashings of the timber framed bridge, which was the main project for the program.

Further details may be found in the two books about the Yangtze, which are fascinating in the detail provided about each vessel, how it was used and all the variations on what, to a westerner, might seem unnecessary, but in fact had been worked out years ago to provide the best solutions to the many different problems on such a long river.

Richard Hopkins

Pyramid knots (Part 1).

by Jan Vos

The 3-bight Pyramid knot

The inspiration for making Pyramid Knots came from two IGKT members; one is from France, M. Luc Prouveur, and the other from USA, Mr. Don Burrhus. It could be handy to read their articles as well. Because of the length of this article it is divided into a series of Knotting Matters. In making the knots, we need a lot of cord, thick paper (or cardboard), the tubes from Don Burrhus, or your homemade tubes (roll and pins) and a few pins and some patience.

The size of the pyramids is described from small (3) to large (8), by the number of bights on each side. The 3-bight pyramid knot is explained in Don Burrhus' book as the 63 facets globe knot.

You can also make the knot on your hand, as described in KM number 98, and in Le Sac de Noeuds number 3, by Luc Prouveur. In case you prefer a tube and pins, then follow the descriptions from Don Burrhus. If you follow the rules it is clear you can make a nice sphere covering over a ball.

Put 3 pins b, c, d in the upper part of a tube, at each of the three bights.
Put 3 pins e, f, g in the lower part of a tube, at each of the three bights, just with a little space under the d. The coding is as follows:

1) B1 to E3 FREE RUN
2) E3 to C1 FREE RUN
3) C1 to F3 FREE RUN
4) F3 to D1 FREE RUN
5) D1 to G3 FREE RUN
6) G3 to B2 U O U
7) B2 to E1 O U O
8) E1 to C2 O U O
9) C2 to F1 U O U
10) F1 to D2 U O U
11) D2 to G1 O U O
12) G1 toB3 O U O U O U
13) B3 to E2 U O U O U O
14) E2 to C3 U O U O U O
15) C3 to F2 O U O U O U
16) F2 to D3 O U O U O U
17) D3 to G2 U O U O U O
18) G2 to B1 U O U O U O U O U

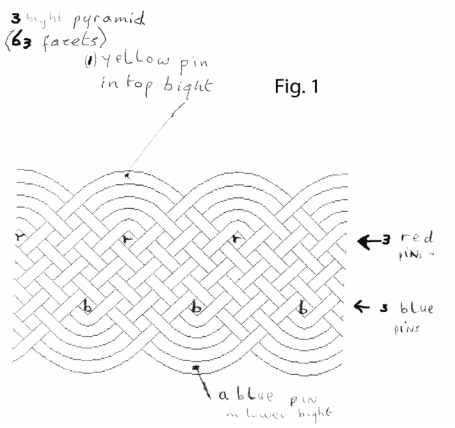


Fig. 1

How then to transform the sphere covering to a pyramid covering?

Make from cardboard an even 3-sided pyramid of 6 cm, each side. Stick, according to the photo, a yellow pin in one of the top bights, a white pin in one of the lower bights (labeled blue in the Figure). Put 3 red pins in the top row, in the innermost side of the upper bights labeled with the letter **r**. Put 3 blue pins in the lower row on the innermost side of the lower bights, labeled with letter **b**. See fig 1.

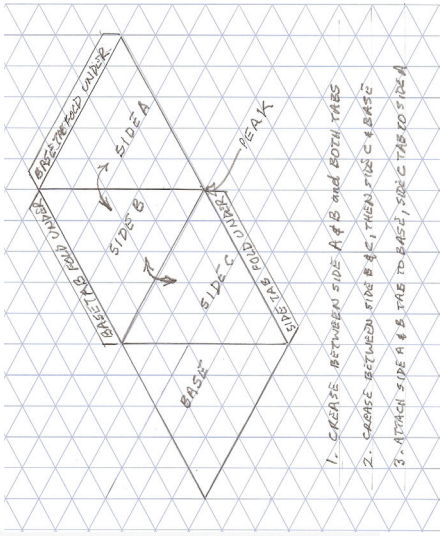
Bring the knot from the tube over the top of your home made cardboard pyramid, in such a way that the white pin is in the centre of the base of the pyramid, the blue pins are in the corners of the base of the pyramid, the red pins are in the middle centre of the base of the pyramid and the yellow pin forms the top peak of the pyramid.

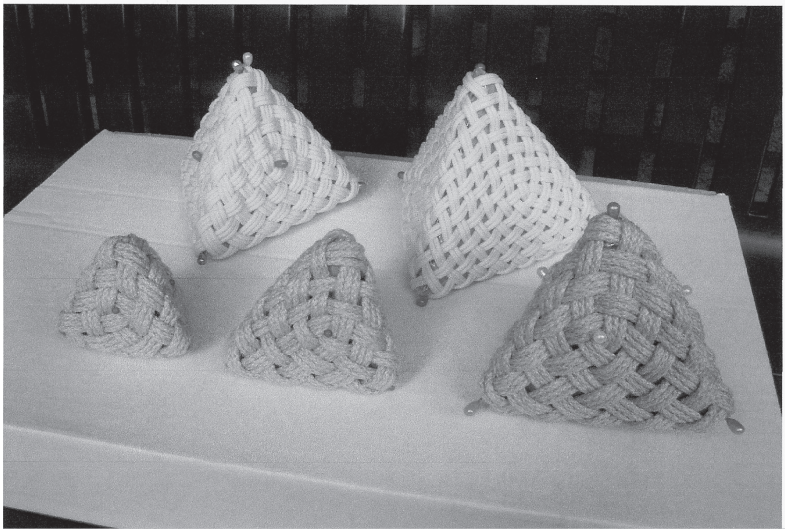
Take out all the slack in the cord, carefully. Don't pull too hard. In doubling or tripling, you will absorb some of the slack you had before, especially in the centres.

The result is a beautiful 3 bight pyramid knot, see photo below left, gray.

[Make sure that you watch for the next part of Knotting Matters, where instructions are given for making the 5-bight, 6-bight and 8-bight pyramid knot. Your comments about this form of extended instruction are especially welcome - do you like it, not like it, are indifferent to it? Let your Editor know please!

The diagram below may help you in making a cardboard form for your Pyramid Knot - Ed]]


BASE: TAG FOLD UNDER
SIDE A
PEAK
SIDE B
SIDE C
SIDE TAB FOLD UNDER
BASE: TAG FOLD UNDER
BASE
1. CREASE BETWEEN SIDE A & B and BOTH TABS
2. CREASE BETWEEN SIDE B & C, THEN SIDE C & BASE
3. ATTACH SIDE A & B TAB TO BASE; SIDE C TAB TO SIDE A



The 4-bight Pyramid Knot.

Having made the 3-bight Pyramid Knot, now to make the bigger 4-bight one:
It would be a challenge to make the knot on your (big) hands by Luc's method. If this challenge is too much, look at the 108 facet knot described by Don Burrhus.

If you follow the above instructions, the result is a bigger pyramid with 4 bights on each of its ribs or edges.
Use a tube and make marks for 3 bights, numbers 1, 2 and 3.
Put 4 pins a, b, c, d in the upper part of a tube at each of the three bights.
Put 4 pins e, f, g, h in the lower part of a tube, at each of the three bights, just with a little space under the d. The coding for the 4-bight pyramid, 108 facets globe, is as follows:

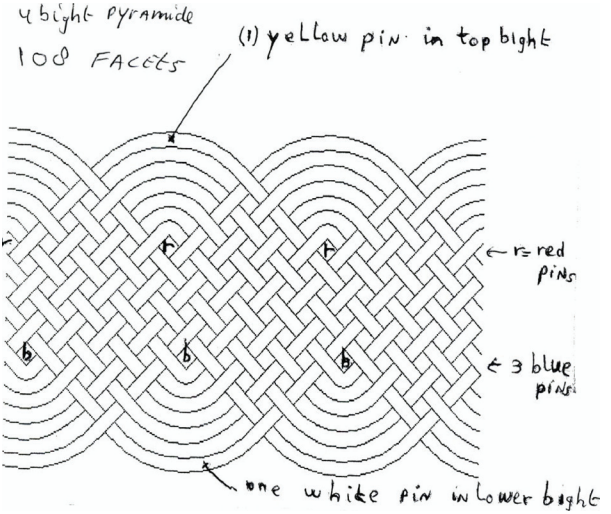
1) A1 to G3 FREE RUN
2) G3 to B2 O
3) B2 to H1 O
4) H1 to C3 U O
5) C3 to E1 U
6) E1 to D2 O
7) D2 to F3 U
8) F3 to A2 O U U
9) A2 to G1 O O U
10) G1 to B3 O U U O
11) B3 to H2 U O O O U
12) H2 toC1 U O O U U O
13) C1 to E2 O U U U O
14) E2 to D3 O U U O
15) D3 to F1 U U O
16) F1 to A3 O U U O O U
17) A3 to G2 O O U U O U O
18) G2 to B1 O U U O U O U O
19) B1 to H3 U O O U O U O O U
20) H3 to C2 O U O U O U U O U
21) C2 to E3 O U O U U O
22) E3 to D1 U O U O U O
23) D1 toF2 U O U O U O U
24) F2 to A1 O U O U O U O U O U

How to transform the sphere covering to a pyramid covering?

Make, from cardboard, an even 3-sided pyramid, of 7 cm each side. Stick, according to the photo, a yellow pin in one of the top bights, a white pin in one of the lower bights. Put 3 red pins in the top row, in the innermost side of the upper bights.

Put 3 blue pins in the lower row on the innermost side of the lower bights. See fig below.

Follow the other instructions described in the 3 bight pyramid knot to finish the knot.



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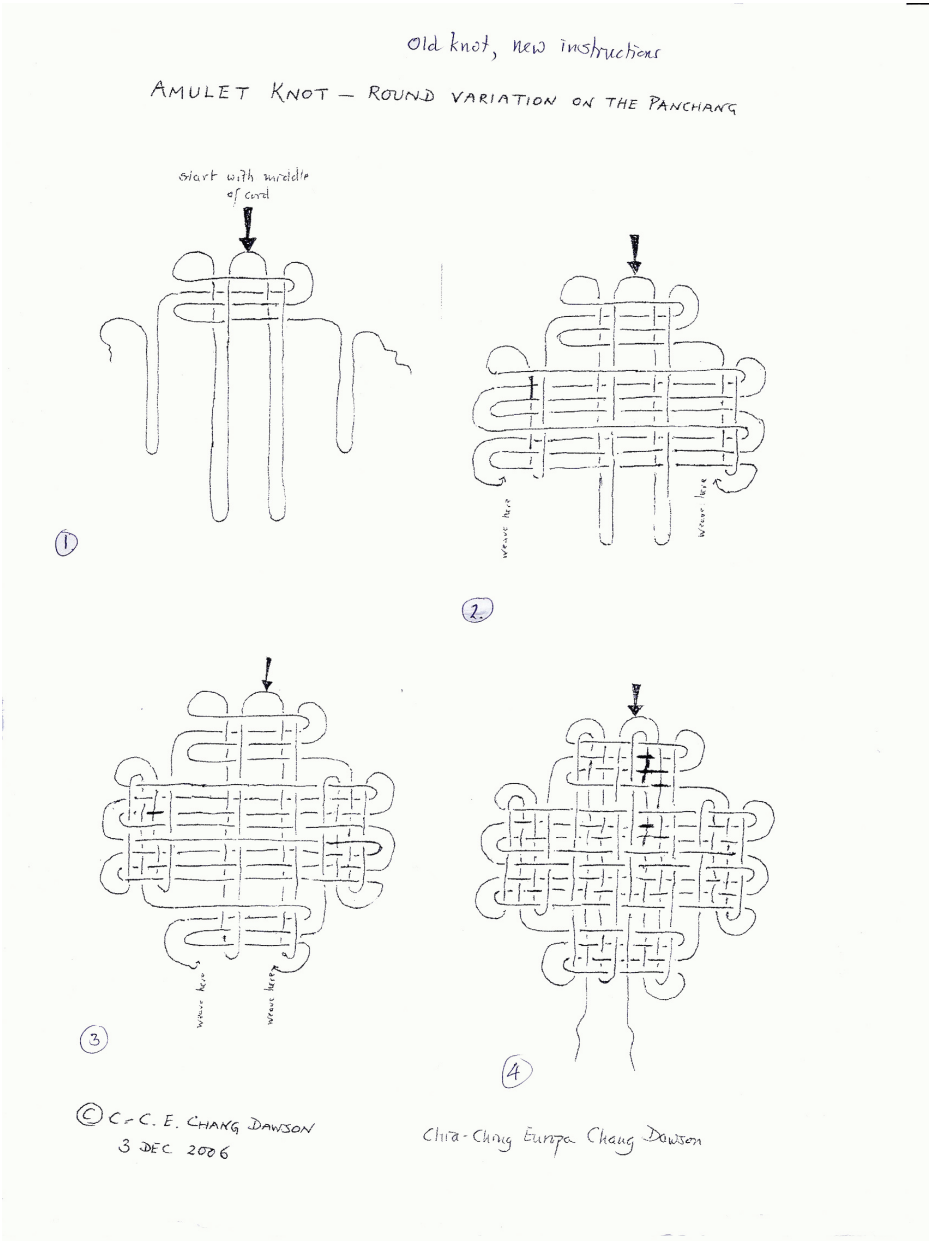
Amulet Knot

by Europa Chang Dawson



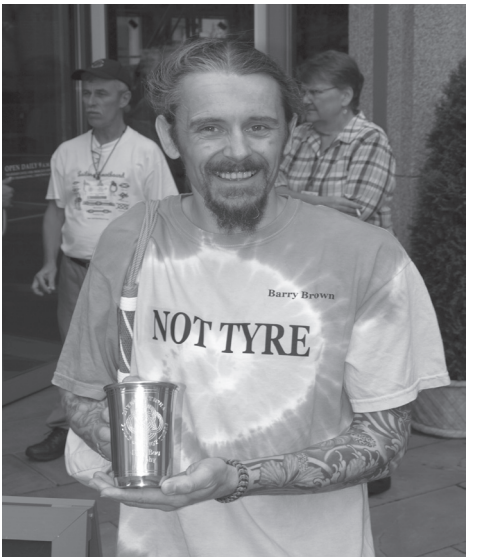
Ditty Bag Award

The one common item that all practitioners of knots eventually come to acquire is some sort of storage container for their tools, thread, twine and supplies; a Ditty Bag. This vessel of gear comes in many forms (a bag, basket or box). It is made of various materials (cloth, canvas, plastic or wood) and can simply be either a plain store bought piece, one that has been painstakingly made by hand or one that has merely been adorned with decorative additions or needed repairs.

In time, through its construction and use, a transformation often takes place. They become a true thing of beauty, a personal extension of its owner, user and creator. To many, this indispensable piece of equipment is more or less overlooked. To them, it is a mere tool. One, though utilized, that is a working piece of equipment. Yet to others, more than this is seen in each of them. They see the details in its construction, its functionality, and its aesthetic beauty. One member of the IGKT that seemed to see all of these aspects of a person's ditty bag or box and had a deep love for their construction, and respect for their makers, was Gary Sessions.

Gary was a member from the USA, a large part of the Texas Branch and one whose heart was in the International aspect of the Guild. To have met Gary, one could not come away without feeling his passion for knot tying, his concern for the Guild and of course, ditty bags. This past spring, 2009, we lost Gary from this life, but not his love of the ditty bag. To honor his memory, an annual award has been created in his name to recognize a Guild member's personal ditty bag.

This award is to encompass all types and conditions of one's ditty, along with the tales of their creation and use. So, to encourage participation within our association, any active member may submit a picture(s), by mail or email, and a brief write up of their favorite ditty for consideration by the end of the month of June. A committee, made up of the Editor of Knotting Matters, two members of the Executive Council and past award winners, will judge each entry and pick the year's exceptional example. The winner will be announced at the annual half-year meeting, held usually in October in various locations around the world, and their award will be mailed to them. A perpetual plaque will also be held by the Guild and each winner's name engraved upon it.



How Do All

from Barry (Bazz) Brown

First Recipient of the Ditty Bag Trophy, 2009

I would just like to take a moment to say a Mahoosive Thank You to Dan Machowski, the IGKT and whomever else may have been involved, for considering me worthy enough to be the first recipient of The Ditty Bag Trophy; awarded in memory of the late Gary Sessions , a member of the IGKT, a ditty bag craftsman and a true gentleman.

I was left absolutely gobsmacked and almost speechless when I heard my name announced by Dan Machowski in the auditorium at the New Bedford Whaling Museum; it was a completely unexpected honour for which I will be eternally grateful.

The Trophy means so much more than a prize to me, and I am very grateful that I have been considered worthy of receiving it. I hope that the recipient of the next trophy understands that it is more than just a prize; it is about honouring the great man and his love of making ditty bags that was the inspiration behind it.

Though I only had the pleasure of meeting Gary for the first time and, sadly, the last, during the week-long 25th anniversary of the IGKT in Fareham, England, I felt like I had known him for years, as I had been inspired by him since getting my first issue of Knotting Matters, #70, in which one of Gary's gorgeous ditty bags was featured with drawn thread work on it (also shown again in KM #100). I had heard nothing but praise about Gary's ditty bags from other Guild members, including Sarah Ford and Bruce & Linda Turley.

At the meeting in Fareham, Gary had said that he really wanted to meet me, and that when he grows up, he would like to be just like me (I think he must have had one too many cups of tea when he said this LOL!). When I attended his workshop in which he demonstrated how to make drawn thread work from a sheet of canvas, he said he was honoured that I chose to join in his workshop. If only he had known the honour was all mine!

I only hope that I can be half the Gentleman that Gary was.
From my heart, I thank you.

Take care,

Barry ;)

NOT TYRE
INTERNATIONAL
OF KNOT
Dilly Bag
Trophy

CULLERA SPLICES

by Owen K. Nuttall

On a recent holiday to visit my sister and her husband, who live in Cullera, Spain, which lies 30 miles south of Valencia, [I saw some unusual splices being made]. Cullera is a town on the east coast with the river Xuquer running alongside of the town. The river has a small fishing fleet, consisting of five or six deep sea trawlers, and numerous small coastal fishing boats.

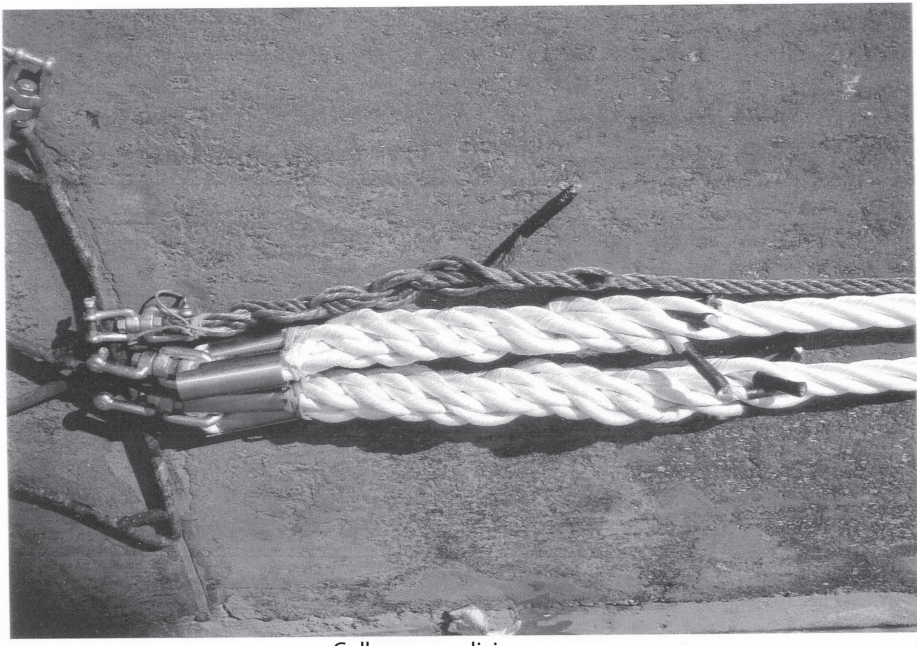
The river is also a sheltered haven for lots of pleasure craft. Yachts have to be moored below the four lane bridge, a huge single-span concrete bridge with a ten-metre clearance at its centre [10 metres = 33 feet]. The jetty runs parallel to the river, and a main road runs alongside.

On one early morning walk I noticed four men with a long rope, [so] I went over to see what they were doing. The rope in question was 25 - 30 metres long [80 - 100 feet], with a diameter of 50 - 60 millimetres [2 - 2.5 inches]. The four men were splicing the three strand rope. One man held the eye end, one the tail end of the splice. One man was working a large metal fid, and one man was tucking one strand of the rope (this rope was already spliced at one end). What I was watching was a type of splicing I had never seen before. I have always followed [the] conventional way of tucking the working end against the lay of the rope, and working one strand in turn until the splice was completed.

What the four men were doing was working one end <u>with</u> the lay of the rope. This was done by the man with the fid rotating it around the rope, while one man tucked the working end. This was done until the end of the splice. Then the second end was taken down in the same manner. Then the third end was taken down to complete the splice. As can be seen on the photos an EYE splice, which is opposite to what I was taught. It must be a sound way of splicing, as fishermen would not want to lose expensive ropes or their towed nets and catch.

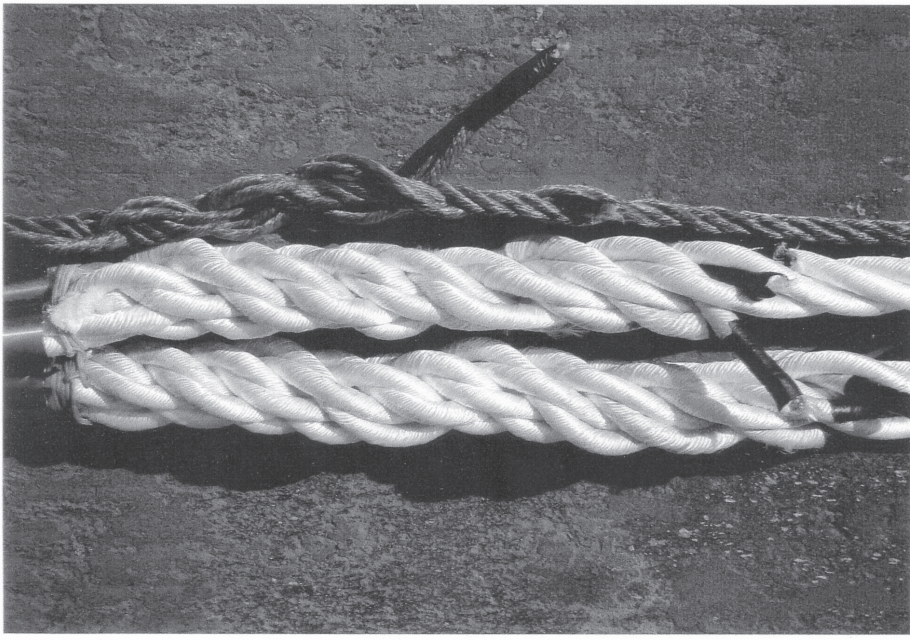
A smaller diameter four strand rope was placed alongside the larger rope and the same length. This was spliced differently. The eye was formed with the four strands split into pairs. These were then passed through the centre of the rope (one pair from the left and one pair from the right). The fid was then rotated two twists and the left and right were passed in opposite directions. Two more twists with the fid and ends passed through (as above) until it has reached its required length of splice. This must also have met the required strength for the fishermen. Where these ropes were placed in rotation for fishing, I think they must have been attached to the net, and the outer end to the steel cable, from the winch.

I hope a member can shed more light on how these ropes are used.



Cullera eye splicing

Close-up Mr. De Mille?



KNOTTING IMAGERY IN JUST SIX WORDS

(as suggested by Geoffrey Budworth)

Dear Editor:

"**Knotting Matters; knotting much else matters**."

John Heselton.

Dear Editor,

Missed the deadline for the next issue but I've been away. Not that that matters because I wanted to say hello anyway. I think it's great that there is a worldwide group but can't believe there are only about 30 or so of us in this country!! [Australia - Ed] Started tying knots as a Scout and re-kindled my interest years later as a leader for 10 years. Still do an odd knot night every now and again. I manage a caravan park (so if any members end up here their accommodation is going to be very cheap) and have a table in the reception area where I put a bit of knot stuff and am amazed by the interest - take their booking and then more often than not end up showing them how to tie a Monkey Fist or whatever else stirs their curiosity. Anyway, in just six words ... a few I've thought of:

What's knot to know about life?
It's knot what you know, it's ....

but the best I think is:

To be or knot to be

and the knots a sheet bend, a cat's paw and maybe a bit of figure eight seizing but who cares - don't they look great!!!!

John Chapman

Enrico Lagana, Via Crispi 133 17027 PIETRA LIGURE
Pietra Ligure, Giune [June} the 21st 2009

A propos of the six words .... I don't know what to call it (KM #104) I want to send my little contribution, if you repute it to be of any value.

If knots must be, let it.
Watch out! Bends ahead now.
A knot in need, friend indeed.
Cheer a friend, welcome a sailor.

Enrico Lagana

BOOK REVIEW

by Geoffrey Budworth

AIR - EARTH - FIRE - WATER

four tales concerning *Arxnodorum & the Knots of Fate*, featuring The Knot-Shop Man
(C) 2009 David Whiteland (Beholder)
Published in Great Britain by Exploding Pen Ltd. on 09-09-09 as a special limited edition of 200 copies to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the on-line story-puzzle Planetarium [www.beholder.co.uk]
ISBN 978-0-9544543-4-0 (Air) 978-0-9544543-3-3 (Earth) 978-0-9544543-5-7 (Fire) 978-0-9544543-6-4 (Water)

Seamanship and other matter-of-fact knotting manuals have been with us for 200 years; and, since the creation of the IGKT in 1982, we have enjoyed some mould-breaking, fresh and original publications. Fictional prose and poesy, however, with rare exceptions (see my reviews in KM #96 and #103 by US novelist and Guild member Susan Patron) have remained a neglected genre.

Now we have this matching set of four hardback and dust-jacketed books - each about 8-inches by 5 1/2-inches, with 160 pages printed on 150 gsm silk stock - signed by the author and ingeniously tied together with two lengths of 6 mm Hardy Hemp 3-strand rope, by means of a chunky double-crown knot (ABOK#2435), its four cut ends seized with the neatest of constrictor knots.

David Whiteland's enchanting stories '*written for smart children and thoughtful adults*', which may be read in any order, describe the individual quests of four young people, each of whom dares to tie an elemental knot of fate to ensure a chosen path for his or her future life.

Foundling girl **Sky** (Air) aims to be captain of a hot-air ship and win the Snow Flower Run that brings valuable Arctic plants to market. Loner and petty thief **Jill** (Earth) seeks popularity and friends. Blacksmith's son **Tom** (Fire) is determined to revenge the murder of his mother and father. **Jack** (Water) strives to rescue his elder sister-cum-guardian Fleur from captivity by pirates.

To achieve their goals, each youngster has to venture Underneath, via the Tangled Plain to Arxnodorum, a multi-towered and turreted white rock citadel where, alone within its many-layered maze of corridors, chambers and stairways, he or she must negotiate a memorized route taught them by the Knot-Shop Man to tie his or her fate-specific knot. But their ordeals are merely the precursor to adult lives back Above where the outcome is never as imagined, because 'Fate says nothing about timing' ... and ...'a knot that ties fate is very unforgiving.'

The author's stories combine absorbing plot lines with supernatural notions, page-turning pace, and a fantastic cast of supporting cameo roles, including Jonjon Faa, who travels with a bagful of rope and a head full of knots; Liffley Washcord, the Inspector of Knots; and, of course, the enigmatic Knot-Shop Man known variously as Mister Overhand (Earth), Mathew Walker/Carrick (Air), Magnus (Fire) and Catspaw (Water); as well as knots of every imaginable kind, real and surreal, from lovers' knots to monkeys' fists and knotted noodle soup ... plus the most heart-stopping application of a constrictor knot ever conceived.

David Whiteland's *Arxnodorum & The Knots of Fate* quartet is an enchanting celebration of knotting, its lure and lore, but, through all of the myth and make-belief, he continuously affirms the effectiveness of real-world cordage contrivances, because;

'A knot is the most useful thing in the world, should you ever need it.'

Rotterdam 2009

from our Midlands Stringer

For those not able to get to the half-yearly meeting in America, (and even some who had), the Dutch Branch organised a get together in Rotterdam, Holland. The boat De Hoop, that normally hosts the monthly meeting of the Dutch Branch, was opened up for visitors from other countries. In addition, a display was also organised in the Havenmuseum, just along the quayside. With over 30 members from Holland, Belgium, France, Germany, England and America/Germany, the international element of the Guild was well represented.

Arriving on the Friday, you had only to spot the knotted frame on the door leading into a boat on the land just outside the museum, to know you had arrived at the meeting place of the Dutch Branch. Stepping inside, you were met with a collection of people all armed with cord or rope and tying knots – you had arrived and were made very welcome. After a short while, we decamped along the quay, to the Haven Museum, to start setting up for the meeting next morning. In this interim before opening up to members of the public, was a good chance to swap knotting ideas and techniques and get to know those you had not met before, or had not seen for a long time. During the evening, some of us gathered in a restaurant a short distance away and carried on knotting over the evening meal.

Next morning, we gathered again in De Hoop, before the museum opened and then moved back along the quay. Jan Hoefnagel and Herman Evers officially opened the meeting. During the day, the raffle table slowly filled up with contributions, and more members arrived and set up their displays. The public drifted in from the quayside and marvelled at the range of work done by members of the Guild, and a local TV station came and interviewed members.

Lunch was provided by the Museum – we were an attraction and so deserved special treatment! Members and their partners were treated to a trip around the harbour of Rotterdam on an old patrol boat, which included a running commentary on all the places of local interest. At the end of the afternoon, the raffle was held that included some very splendid prizes!

During the evening, we again gathered up the road at the local restaurant for the Knot Tyers Supper, before wending our way to our hotels and bed after a very enjoyable day. Next morning, we gathered a bit later in De Hoop and had further opportunities for swapping ideas and techniques. Back in the Museum, we displayed our craft to the public and had a further opportunity to chat and learn new knots. Gradually, members drifted off to head homeward, before the meeting was finally closed shortly after lunchtime.

All had a splendid weekend of knot tying. Language was no barrier, new friendships were made and old friendships further bonded in this happiest of gatherings. Well done to all who made this a special occasion.

Top left, c/w:
Members in De Hoop, Richard Hopkins & Antoine Leroy at Knot Supper, Jan Hoefnagel opening the celebration, exhibition in the HavenMuseum, members on board the Havendienst 2.

AGLETS

(Old French: *aguillettes* - little needles)

An aglet is that cylindrical tag on the end of a lace or lanyard which both prevents it fraying and makes threading easier. When not plastic, they can be metal (brass, copper, silver), even glass or stone. Although essentially functional, they may also be decorative.

To create single-strand Turk's Heads, pineapple knots and suchlike, which involve much under-over-under snake-and-ladder tucking of thicker cordage, Guild members often resort to one of those hollow needles (a set of which has several different sizes that nest one inside the other when not in use); or smaller needles with an internal thread into which the working end is screwed and held.

[some surgical sutures are made with pre-attached needles]

Otherwise KM readers no doubt improvise aglets in one way or another, for example by:

heat-sealing the end (synthetic cordage only);
dipping the end in melted candle wax or resin;
soaking it in glue or nail polish;
whipping it with fine thread over glue;
wrapping it in adhesive tape;
fitting a short length of hobbyist's heat-shrink or small-gauge metal tubing.

Anyway, if you did not know before, these endings are aglets.

GB

A Note of Thanks

from Anita Osis, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

I would like to thank the IGKT-NAB for the warm welcome I received during the October 9 - 11 half-year General Meeting in New Bedford, MA, USA. I met so many friendly new friends from around the world and saw numerous interesting and amazing things.
Everyone's enthusiasm was addictive. Dave [Lambert] is now teaching me how to tie the dragonflies Bruce Turley had shown him how to do one evening.
I look forward to meeting everyone again.

All the best from Canada,
Anita Osis

Branch Lines

All Branches

Calling all Branches.....
The Council invite Branches to volunteer to organise the half-yearly General Meeting in October 2010 and the AGM in May 2011. The AGM must be held in the UK but there is no such restriction on the half-yearly meeting.

Ideally the venue should come at little or no cost (e.g. a museum will attract more visitors because the Guild will put on displays) but if a good venue is available at a reasonable price then let me have details before you commit to anything. Hopefully we will recover most of our costs through the usual raffle. All that is needed for now is a contact name and the proposed location for the meeting, with an idea of the likely cost if any. The closing date is Friday 15 January 2010 but please don't wait until the last minute! As soon as possible after the closing date the Council will decide on the winners and let everyone know.

Barry Mault
Hon. Secretary

Notice of Annual General Meeting, 2010

The Annual General Meeting of the Guild will be held in Weston-super-Mare, UK on May 9th and May 10th, 2010.
Details available from Richard Hopkins and in March edition of Knotting Matters

EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH meeting 26th September, 2009

The meeting, which was held at the East Anglian Museum of Life, was opened with a minute of silence in memory of David Watson and John Addis who had both passed away since the last branch meeting. Both were well known and will be missed.

After the essential boring and formal stuff, carried out under the auspices and gavel of the colourful Tuffy Turner, the meeting became much more interesting once we got onto our favourite subject, knotting, and were allowed to get our string out of our pockets.

Apart from our regular feature 'My Favourite Knot' the specific theme for the meeting was 'Rings and Circles', which provided a great deal of scope.

Tony Lee from Norwich gave a talk on his favourite knot, the figure of eight knot, highlighting a number of lesser-known facts about this familiar knot.

Des talked about mats featured in his latest book, showing a piece of 'work in progress' which demonstrated the labour intensive nature of such works of art. Ultimately this will be placed on the floor ....to be walked on.

There were also some beautiful examples of round mats, one of which was from a design included in Skip Pennock's popular book 'Decorative Knots'. In addition, some endless grommets were displayed, including some interesting and ornate spherical examples made by the late Harold Scott.

As always, the meeting was brought to an abrupt halt, when it was found that we had run out of time, and had to return the key of the meeting room, but knot before we had agreed on the theme for the next meeting, which will be on the 20th March, 2010. Apart from another look at 'My Favourite Knot' we shall be examining the general subject of 'Braiding'.

For more information contact:-
Des Pawson 01473 690090 or e-mail to: des@despawson.com

IGKT - NAB October 10 & 11, 2009

Captions to photographs on center pages, starting center left, clockwise:
Portrait of Clifford Ashley by Mrs. Hamer, presented to Phoebe Chardon Ashley; President Dan Machowski and Mrs Barbara Sessions presenting Ditty Bag award to Barry Brown; multi-colored dragonflies on display in New Bedford; Ashley's original button knots (see also Chapter 10, ABOK);

finishing to mat edge detail by David Lambert, IGKT-NAB of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada; Bob and Sue Bosch with Barry Brown carefully watching Loren Damewood making silver knots; Knot Supper knot smiles; Phoebe, Des and Dan at Ashley's farm.

All due credit and thanks goes to Bob Dollar for having organized the various trips, excursions, visits and displays that were available to us. We have heard nothing but good reports from the participants and especially for the good folks at the New Bedford Whaling Museum, who made their wonderful museum available to us, extended every courtesy and seemed to enjoy every minute of the experience.

MIDLANDS BRANCH

DATES FOR 2009 BRANCH MEETINGS.

14 Dec 09 – Branch Xmas meal.

Pacific Americas Branch

This just in from Branch President Mike Bromley, Rosamond Writers Club, Rosamond, California, USA

Farrier's Admonsihment

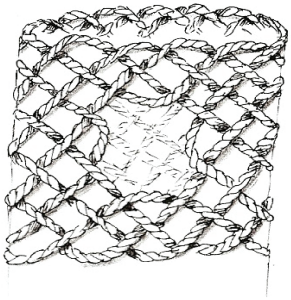
The horse is a beautiful creature, so proud and so bold,
This we can see for ourselves, no need to be told.
A beautiful creature right down past his knees, I look and behold, ***What are these***?!
For his feet are contracted, wry footed, quarter cracked and bent, Without good feet, he's not worth a cent.
For to see a horse limp gives me grief untold,
And if there's someone at fault I've been known to scold.
Through sandy desert or o'er rocky trail, he can't do his best if his feet they should fail.
Tho' it's been said before, I'll say it once more - A horse can't do his job well if his feet are sore.
The horse should be shod with a sense of panache,
If he's to run a 300-yard dash
The horse should be shod with a certain sense of style if he's to carry his rider for many a mile.
The horse is a beautiful creature of fine symmetry and form and so should be his feet - this should be the norm.
It only makes sense that his shoes be made neat so that they only enhance his already beautiful feet.
So farriers please endeavor to learn your craft well. If you don't you'll cause many a horse living hell.

Mike Bromley, The Blacksmith Poet

How Do We Create a Turk's Head with a Hole?

By Patrick Lefour
Reproduced with permission

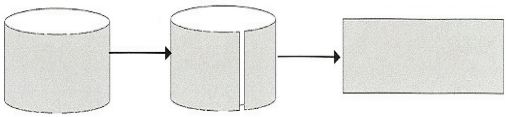
Before starting any research about a "new" Turk's Head, let's talk about what we know as a "classic" Turk's Head.



What We Know

- A Turk's Head (TH) has no ends
- A TH is a circular, two-dimensional knot
- Theory describes how to calculate the number of strands to make any TH
- The basic TH is able to be made in the hand
- Methods exist to tie large TH knots, but they are specific to only some of the TH knots
- Most of the research and methods developed to date concern TH which are made only with rope
- The study of TH knots is a little complicated because drawings of TH knots are not easy to study

Analyzing the Facts: A TH is a Circular Knot (a 2D knot)
Starting with the concept of a TH, when we cut it, we get a plan [of a flat knot]:



In most books, the plan is considered as the base[1]. The method of creating a TH is opposite of this; we start from a plan and then form the cylinder.

So, an axis of research will be focused on the plan (also thought of as the resulting method of building). Because most of the "classic" TH knots are building on a cylinder, the method seems easy. But in fact you simplified the thing itself, the cylinder! The cylinder itself is in fact a polygonal prism[2], where the number of faces is infinity. Consider instead now that the TH could be built on a similar polygonal prism. The polygonal prism is defined by the polygon at top and bottom, and by the number of faces[3] which comprise the prism. The number of sides to the polygon is the number of faces of the prism. Here is an example of a hexagonal prism in Figure 1, page 40:

By cutting one edge of a face we obtain six sides or faces (Fig. 2, page 40). Now, each face of the prism could contain a part of the knot[4].

Could Another Family of Knots use the same theory as the TH?

The second axis of reflection must answer the following question if we could find this idea:

Is it possible that another family of knots uses the same theory (i.e. a two-dimensional knot should be better)?

As we have seen previously, if we cut a TH, we obtain a braid (see Fig 3, page 40).

If we try to join some parts of the braid form, we obtain a knot. The knot is a plan [flat] knot (Fig. 4, page 40).

Now we can choose some parameters to describe the knot, such as length and width (also known as the number of bights or loops as Fig. 5).

Fig. 6 is 4 loops [bights] in length and 4 loops [bights] in width. We will annotate it as 4 X 4. Because the knot contains axes of symmetry, we can change the length by width to have width by length (e.g. a 4 X 3 is equivalent to a 3 X 4). The second advantage of this family [flat knots] seems to be the facility to draw it – a piece of paper is enough!

In studying this family, I obtain three results:

- A N X N is not possible with only one endless strand
- This family is a 2D knot, like the TH
- The family respects the same law of the number of strands as the "classic" TH

This family will be called the Square Knot family (because the Square Knot N X N is not possible with a single strand). The knot family could be considered as a base (plan).

Studying this new family

Now we have a family of knots that we could study. Imagine now if we could modify this family. For example in adding an extension (Fig. 7, page 40).

If we draw in a Square Knot with a hole, the knot appears like Fig. 8, page 40, where 4 of the L-shaped pieces are joined together.

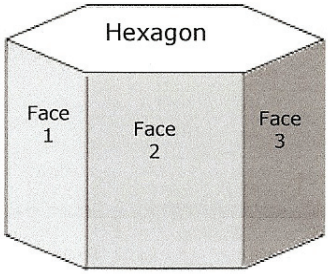


Fig. 1: A hexagonal polygon

Fig. 2: One side cut and the figure is unrolled to show its six faces side by side

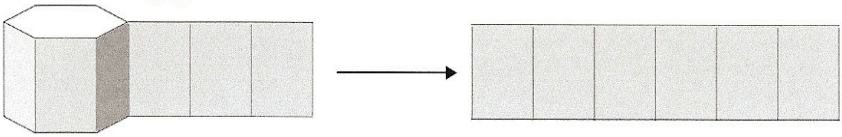


Fig. 3: Braid structure

Fig. 4: Flat Knot

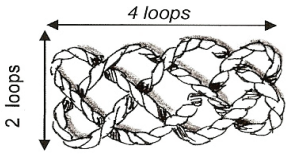


Fig. 5: 4 loops by 2 loops

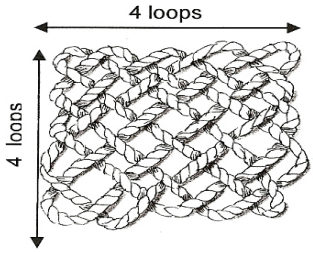


Fig. 6: A 4 by 4 (5 cords!)

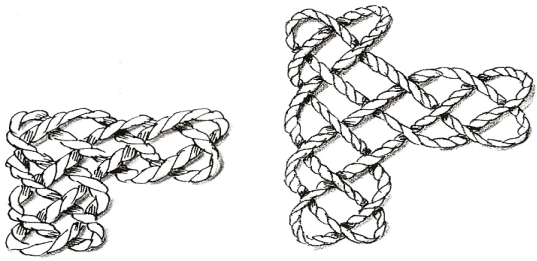


Fig. 7: Adding two pieces, we get an extension

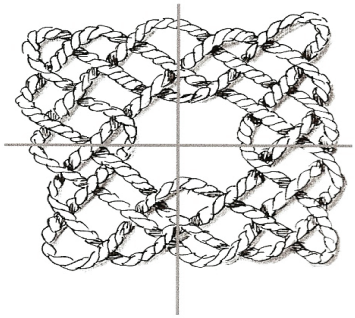


Fig. 8: The Square Knot, of 4 pieces extended

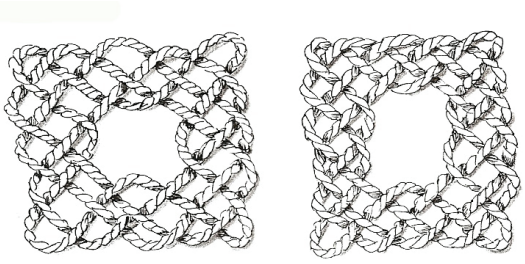


Fig. 9: TH with a hole dependent on # of bights inside, outside and # of holes

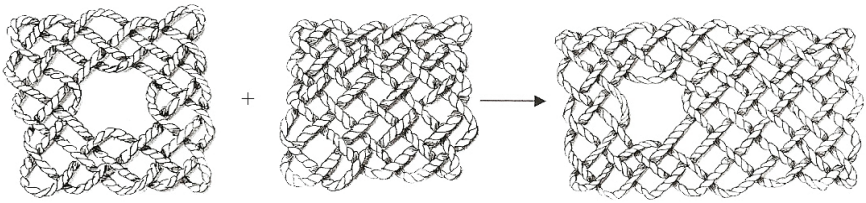
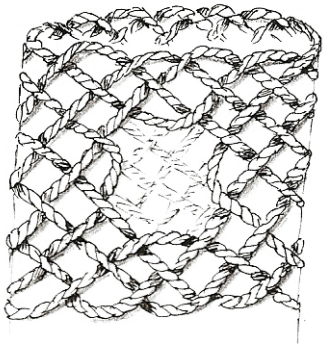


Fig. 10: Add two shapes together to get the combined shape.

Fig. 11: After joining the extremities of the combined shape, we get this shape - a TH with a hole!.



The TH with a hole depends on many parameters (Fig. 9).

- The number of loops on the length and width (external)
- The number of loops on the length and width (inside the hole)
- The number of holes

Now we have just joined each face (Fig. 10). After that, then the extremities [each end] could be joined (Fig. 11). We could obtain, for example, the TH[5] above.

Notes

1 This method of building we will call the Mercator method. This describes a construction method for knots that cover a surface (2D) not just a TH.

2 In some books (like the Encyclopedia of Rawhide and Leather Braiding by Bruce Grant) the cylinder use some faces to describe either the faces that are hidden or the method of tying.

3 The size of face is a convention. The case of one face is different than another. The number of other faces could be defined by you. The size of face depends on the support on which you tie your knot. Don't forget that most of the time you are tying your TH on a cylinder. The method describes a Principle of Construction.

4 The concept is based on a principle that I call Fragment Principle

5 The photographed TH is a TH with three holes equidistant around the equator.

The Ashley Farmhouse (R) and Main House (L)

Roll-away bed end in the Main House - note the use of a Becket!

Season's Greetings from Sarah and Clifford Ashley

Last Word

This comes from Joe Bennett, referring to the knot board at the top of the back page:

Lindsey:

Here is a knot board I finished recently which was inspired by the work of Bernard Cutbush. It measures 24.5-in (w) by 22-in (h). The base is 3 mm MDF upon which is glued 12 mm corkboard. The working surface I then gave three coats of dark blue acrylic paint, making it ready to apply the knotwork. The outer edge is 8-strand half-hexagonal sennit all the way round. Then, working toward the centre (1) a flat of square knotting (grey, white filler 2 mm) (2) Graumont & Hensel (G & H) #286 (white 2 mm) (3) 8-strand square sennit (grey, lt. blue, 2 mm) (4) two lengths of G & H #9 laid side by side (blue 3 mm) (5) 8-strand square sennit (grey 2 mm) (6) a line of 5-strand buttons (white 2 mm) (7) Same as 5 above (8) Spiral (white 2 mm) (9) G & H #5 (lt. blue 2 mm) (10) Same as 8 above (11) A row of small circular buttons (grey 2 mm) (12) G & H # 217 (white 2 mm)

The top section has a row of Star knots, 9-point to 3-point, with blue centres (white 2.8 mm). This section also has a row of rose knots generally dimishing in size from centre to edge and picked out in grey and blue (white 3 mm). The top corner pieces are short lengths of plain square knotting (grey) edged with 4-strand round sennit (grey, white). These are topped with a few mats and buttons. The bottom corner pieces from edge to centre are:

(1) 4-strand flat sennit (white 2 mm) (2) a row of ABOK #748 4-strand crowned, enhanced with blue (grey and blue, 2 mm and 1.25 mm)(3) 4-strand round sennit (white 2 mm) (4) G & H #286 (grey 2 mm).

With reference to 'whip handle designs' (Ron Edwards) I used the spiral method for the sidebars (18 mm dowelling). There are 48 strands (24 white, 24 grey 2 mm). The covering comprises Chess Board Plait (03, u3, tripled strands) and Short Herringbone (04, u4, doubled strands). A Pineapple Knot and Gaucho Knots finished these off. The end knots are ABOK #2223 with a Pineapple finish (white, grey, 2 mm). The bottom bar is 28 mm dowelling painted blue with acrylic paint. At the centre is a 33-part, 12-bight Gaucho Knot, doubled. Then there are two Pineapple Knots, base knot 13-part by 11-bight TH. Also two knots from 'Round Knots and Braids' called White Diamonds, base knot 8-part by 5-bight TH. The end knots are from Skip Pennock's DWFK. They are the smallest mat on page 82 and are tripled. Finally, the centrepiece is the seahorse from DWFK surrounded by the usual knotboard stuff.

[There is nothing "usual" about this knotboard or the knotboard by Jesse Scott Eaves - thanks to both of you! - Ed]

Knotting Diary and Calendar

GUILD MEETINGS

Annual General Meeting 2010
Weekend of May 8th/9th, 2010
Weston-super-Mare, UK.

Branch Meetings

Alaskan Branch
Every Wednesday evening 6:30 to 8:00
Anchorage Senior Center
1300 E. 19th Avenue, Anchorage
Contact: Mike Livingstone
Tel: (1) 907/929-7888

East Anglian Branch
Saturday March 20, 2010
The Windmill Room of the Abbots Hall Primary School, Danescourt Ave., Stowmarket
Main theme of the meeting will be Braiding
Contact: Des Pawson
Tel: +44(0)1473 690 090
e-mail: des@despawson.com

Essex Branch
Contact Donald Woods
Tel: +44(0)1708 229178

French Branch
Contact Graham Maclachlan
www.igktfrance.com

German Branch
Contact Peter Willems
Bauer Lanstr. 200c
24939 Flensburg
Germany
Tel: +49 461 73176
Fax: +49 461 7749318
e-mail: peter@fancyworks.de

Midlands Branch
The Old Swan, Netherton
Contact: Bruce Turley
Tel: 0121 453 4124

NorthWest Branch
Christmas Get -to Gether and meal
Sunday 13th December 2009
Contact: Dave Walker (pending until further notice)
Tel: 01244 682117

Netherlands
Every last Saturday of the month (except December)
De Hoop, Rotterdam
Contact: Jan Hoefnagel
Tel: 078 614-6002

North American Branch - East Region
Contact: None available at press time
Tel: See handbook

Pacific Americas Branch
Second Tuesday of each month,
Los Angeles Maritime Institute
San Pedro, California
Contact: Jimmy Williams
Tel: 1-310/679-6864
e-mail: igktpab@yahoo.com

Solent Branch
Fareham Sailing and Motor Boat Club
Fareham, Hants UK
Contact: Ken Yalden
Tel: +44(0)23 9225 9280

Surrey Branch
7th December 2009 (Christmas Social)
Meetings are held at Guildford District Scout Centre, Nightingale Road, Guildford, starting at 20:00hrs. Please phone for more details.
Contact: Secretary, Peter Goldstone
+44(0)1483 763054

Sussex Branch
For details
Contact: Andy Dart
Tel: 07720 813802

Sweden
Contact: Olof Nystrom tel. 08 265065
Pille Repmakar'n tel 08 6110144

West Country Knotters
Last Saturday of odd months
November 28th, 2009 @ 1300 hrs(?)
Tytherington, Nr. Bristol
Contact: Richard Hopkins
Tel: 0117 986 7146

West Yorkshire Branch
Branch meeting 15 November
Contact: David Pearson
Tel: 0113 257 2689

Deadline Dates

Until further notice, the deadlines for getting material to the Editor are as follows:

For the March 2010 issue	1st of February, 2010
For the June 2010 issue	1st of May, 2010
For the September 2010 issue	1st of August, 2010
For the December 2010 issue	1st of November, 2010

SPECIAL NOTICE

Wanted:

SUPPLIES SECRETARY

to handle sales and distribution of Guild Supplies.
Responsibilities include; receiving requests and supplying quotes for goods; calculating postage; despatching goods with invoice; keeping stock records; holding a working supply of stock.
Candidates would be preferably UK-based, and have access to the internet. For further information, contact the Hon. Secretary before Dec 31, 2009

Overhand Knot
Figure Eight Knot
Reef Knot
Sheet Bend
Carrick Bend
Sea Horse